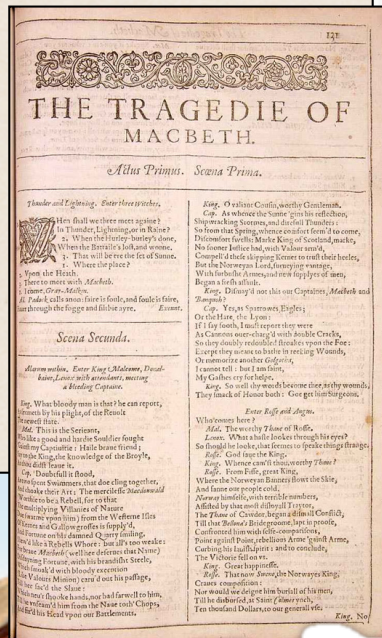


# *Macbeth*

William  
Shakespeare



# What do you know about Shakespeare?



Mr. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARES  
 COMEDIES, HISTORIES, & TRAGEDIES,  
 Published according to the True Originall Copies.

LONDON  
 Printed by Isaac Iaggard, and Ed. Blount. 1616.

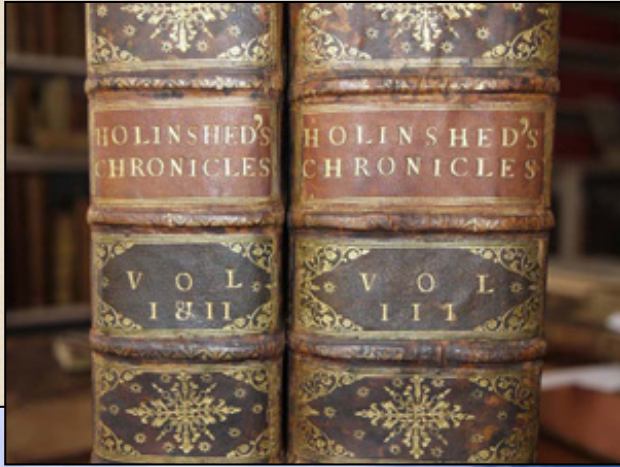


Photo Credit: Tom Green

“BY THE PRICKING  
 OF MY THUMBS,  
 something  
**WICKED**  
 this way comes”  
 - William Shakespeare (Macbeth)



*in search of Macbeth*



Scone Palace



All that's left of McDuff's place.



Unfortunately, the real Macbeth died centuries before this fine castle at Glamis was built...

*"The Scottish Play"*



...but he's buried here, along with Duncan, at Iona.

*English VTB Mr. Nigro*

# Reading *Macbeth*

- ◆ An interpretive problem: “...the only Shakespearean tragedy that has a villain as its hero.” (Lander)
- ◆ A contextual challenge: the “hurly-burly” world of Shakespeare’s England:
  - political instability
  - religious identity
  - social insecurity
- ◆ A simplistic theme: “Vaulting ambition” (1.7.27)
- ◆ Larger questions: the problem of evil; the power of suggestion and human psychology; the presence of the supernatural within the natural order, the impact of political instability, shifting language and social anxiety in a changing age, etc.



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Fun with

# The Tudors

...and one Stuart



## ◆ Henry VII (1485-1509)

- son: Henry VIII (see below)
- daughter: Margaret (married James IV of Scotland)
  - James V (married Mary of Guise)
    - Mary, Queen of Scots (married Lord Darnley)
      - James VI of Scotland, later James I of England (1603-1625)

## ◆ Henry VIII (1509-1547); married to:

- Catherine of Aragon \* (daughter Mary I, 1553-1558; aka: "Bloody Mary")
- Anne Boleyn \*\* (daughter Elizabeth I, 1558-1603; aka "The Virgin Queen")
- Jane Seymour (son Edward VI, 1547-1553)
- Anne of Cleves \*
- Catherine Howard \*\*
- Catherine Parr

\* divorced    \*\* beheaded

Shakespeare's Life: 1564-1616  
Macbeth performed: 1606

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*Fun with* **The Tudors**



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# Macbeth in context

- ◆ 1558 Elizabeth crowned
- ◆ 1564 Shakespeare born
- ◆ 1570 Elizabeth excommunicated
- ◆ 1572 John Donne born
- ◆ 1588 Defeat of the Spanish Armada
- ◆ 1596 Donne sails with Robert Devereaux, Earl of Essex, to Cadiz
- ◆ 1598 Donne appointed Secretary to Thomas Egerton
- ◆ 1599 Opening of the Globe Theater
- ◆ 1601 Richard II and the Essex Rebellion
- ◆ 1601 Donne secretly marries Egerton's niece; imprisoned
- ◆ 1603 Elizabeth dies; James I becomes king; plague outbreak
- ◆ 1605 The Gunpowder Plot
- ◆ 1606 Macbeth written
- ◆ 1611 King James Bible (WS is 47; JD is 39)
- ◆ 1615 Donne becomes an Anglican minister
- ◆ 1616 Shakespeare dies
- ◆ 1621 Donne appointed Dean of St. Paul's
- ◆ 1623 First Folio published
- ◆ 1625 James I dies; Charles I is crowned as king
- ◆ 1631 Donne dies



Historical Note: The Great Fire in 1666 destroyed St Paul's, and ended the plague.

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# Macbeth 1.1 - 1.2

- ◆ The opening scene of a play will often establish the mood; what aspects of the “hurly-burly” world are here?
- ◆ Note the paradoxes at the end of scene 1...
- ◆ Compare and contrast how each scene begins; what is Willie doing here?
- ◆ Hmm...another paradox at the end of scene 2...
- ◆ James VI, Demonology, 1597
- ◆ the three Fates



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# Macbeth 1.3

- ◆ Note that the “worlds” of scenes 1 & 2 come together here; what’s the point of this?
- ◆ What is significant about Macbeth’s first line?
- ◆ How are Macbeth’s and Banquo’s reactions to seeing the witches different?
- ◆ What do the asides of Macbeth reveal about him?
- ◆ What might be important about Macbeth’s use of the term, “chance?”



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# *Macbeth* 1.4 - 1.5

- ◆ Compare and contrast Cawdor and Macbeth as they appear here; see any irony?
- ◆ Note how the idea of appearance vs. reality is presented (1.4.12-13).
- ◆ How is Lady Macbeth different from her husband?
- ◆ What is the dramatic impact of the Messenger's arrival?



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# Macbeth 1.6 - 1.7

- ◆ Note Shakespeare's use of diction in scene 6: what's he up to here?
- ◆ How does Lady M conduct herself in scene 6 in relation to her plan (as explained in scene 5)?
- ◆ Describe Macbeth's vacillation; at this point, do we admire him or not? Why?
- ◆ Examine the interaction between Macbeth and Lady M; how would you characterize this relationship? What, if anything, holds it together?
- ◆ Let's discuss gender roles in light of scene 7...



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# Macbeth Act 2

- ◆ Compare & contrast Banquo & Macbeth in Scene 1.
- ◆ How does Willy draw the audience into Macbeth's anguish in Scene 2?
- ◆ What's the significance of the Porter's speech in Scene 3?
- ◆ Discuss DeQuincy (1823)
- ◆ Note the use of the word "equivocator" (2.3.8).
- ◆ Why are the Old Man's views in Scene 4 important?



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# Macbeth Act 3

- ◆ How would you evaluate Macbeth's and Banquo's assessments of each other? (1)
- ◆ How, if at all, is Macbeth changing, and, if so, why?
- ◆ What did Shakespeare's audience believe about ghosts? See the link: ["Life in Shakespeare's London"](#)
- ◆ Scene 4 is the mid-point of the play and is crucial to its meaning. So, what's so special?
- ◆ Is Macbeth interested primarily in the psychology or politics of power?

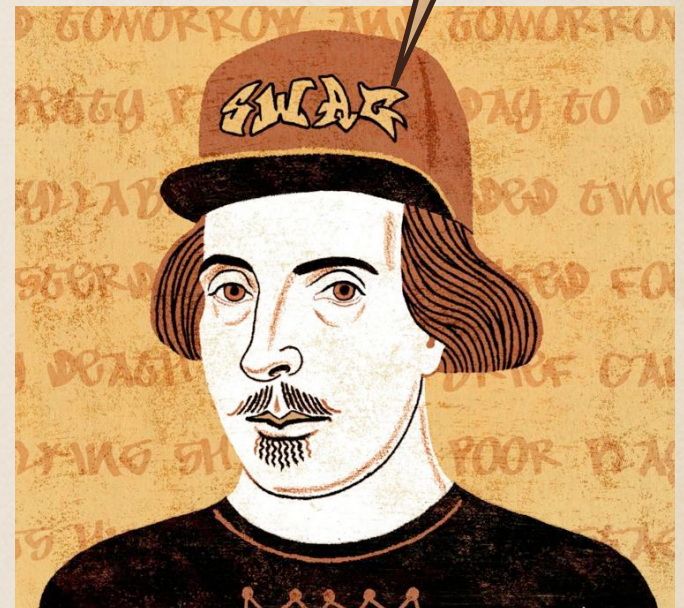


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# Macbeth

*(this message from Will Shakespeare is approved by International Baccalaureate)*

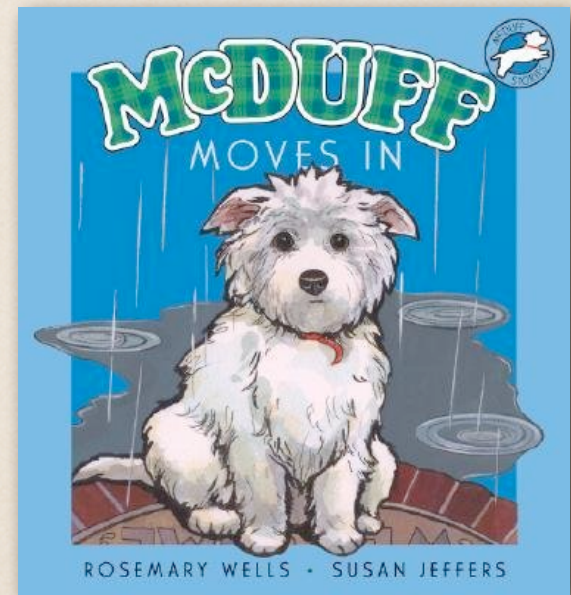
- ◆ I am a genius, so I can structure the play to achieve my own purposes...do you follow?
- ◆ I stuck Dramatic Irony, like, all over the place, so you IB students would have something to do...
- ◆ Are you noticing my clever contrasts...order & disorder, health & sickness, light & darkness, good & evil?
- ◆ I got style, or swag, if you prefer...



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# Macbeth Act 4

- ◆ How might the audience interpret the prophecies?
- ◆ Why has Duff gone to England?
- ◆ What is the purpose of Scene 3?
- ◆ What's the point of Malcom's speech?



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# Macbeth Act 5

- ◆ Note that Lady M, while clearly insane, speaks in prose; this is common in Shakespeare (Ophelia, Lear, etc.)
- ◆ What is the purpose for depicting the military maneuvers in Scene 2?
- ◆ Why does Macbeth long to be a soldier again?
- ◆ Note the professionalism of Malcolm's army in contrast with Macbeth's wild ravings.
- ◆ Macbeth fights with false assurance in the witches' prophecies until he realizes that they told only a partial truth...kinda like equivocation, isn't it?



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# Macbeth

## Review

- ◆ Historical relevance
- ◆ Themes
- ◆ Character Development
- ◆ Literary Techniques



*Choose 1 of 2 prompts; 45 minute essay*